Indian and Foreign Shipping Companies and a number of batches have been imparted training since its inception in 1993;

(b) whether lack of job opportunities for the passed-out cadets in shipping cornpanies has become a major cause of disappointment among them;

(c) whether Chief Minister of Orissa has written to him in the matter with the request to prevail upon the DG Shipping to conduct selection of these seamen for recruitment in the shipping lines; and

(d) if so,the status thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. In fact, job opportunities for the seafarers are available around the globe and they are employed by all shipping companies as per their eligibility and merit.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Opening up of cruise shipping sector

3319. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to open up cruise shipping sector for foreign direct investment as part of its efforts to promote tourism;

(b) if so, whether Government are considering to amend Merchant Shipping Act;

(c) whether high power steering group under Chairmanship of Minister of Shipping and Minister of State for Tourism as its Co-Chairman have been set up to finalise policy in this regard;

(d) if so, what are their main suggestions and by what time a final decision for implementation of their suggestions is likely to be considered; and

(e) to what extent Government have agreed for foreign direct investment of shipping sector?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is already permitted in Shipping and Port infrastructure.

(c) Yes, Sir..

(d) The cruise shipping policy is under formulation and is likely to be finalized by March, 2006.

(e) 100% FDI is already permitted in Shipping sector.

Development of roads in Uttaranchal

3320. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to develop the various roads in the State of Uttaranchal as National Highways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the necessary steps being taken by Government in this behalf?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) At present, emphasis is given for development of roads already declared as National Highways instead of declaring more roads as National Highways.

Model drivers training schools in NER

3321. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that State Governments/NGOs are being given assistance for setting up model drivers training schools ;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) whether any such school for training of drivers has been opened in North East, more particular in Assam and if so, the locations thereof; and

(d) the number of drivers that have been trained during the current year under refresher training schemes of heavy vehicles?